

## NATIONAL CANNERS ASSOCIATION

 Information Letter 

FOR N. C. A. MEMBERS

No. 151

Washington, D. C.

March 6, 1926

## CONTENTS

## Page

## Page

To prevent distribution of swells .....	175	Ranks canning among seven greatest discoveries .....	179
Fiber box specifications .....	176	Extension of time for filing tax returns .....	181
Navy to buy canned asparagus .....	177	To control diseases of seed sweet potatoes .....	181
Canned food exports in January .....	177	Canned food production and exports .....	182
Tomato canners' costs of production .....	177		
U. S. Standards for cannery tomatoes .....	178		
Halibut bait bill favorably reported ..	179		

**To Prevent Distribution of Swells**

As a result of a conference held during the Louisville Convention, at which there were present representatives of the Bureau of Chemistry, the distributors' organizations and the Association's Committee on Cooperation with the Bureau of Chemistry, the Committee has sent a letter to all canners suggesting steps that the industry should take to prevent the sale of spoiled or defective cans of food to consumers. The letter states:

"While it is hard to believe that people would eat the contents of a spoiled, swelled can of food, two instances have occurred recently with serious consequences.

"Representatives of the Bureau of Chemistry held a conference with committees representing this Association and the distributors' organizations, at Louisville during the Convention last month, and it was unanimously agreed that the best solution of this problem can be reached

"(1) By urging all canners to take every possible precaution to eliminate swells or other abnormal cans in their warehouses before making shipments, and

"(2) By an intensive campaign directed to the retail grocers; this campaign to be conducted by canners who employ specialty salesmen and through the sales organizations of wholesale grocers and the chain stores.

"This Association and the distributors' organizations have pledged themselves to render all possible assistance in carrying out this program and they solicit your unqualified support.

"With that end in view, this Committee desires to call the attention of every canner to the necessity of very careful inspection of ALL shipments of canned foods to distributors or con-

sumers, in order to see that such shipments contain no swells, springers, leaks or other abnormal cans. We earnestly request you take this up personally with your shipping clerks, warehouse superintendents, etc., and see that instructions are issued accordingly.

"Canners are also urged to take all possible precautions against trouble with swells, leaks or springers

"(1) By keeping close supervision over their fillers, sealing machines and processing equipment, and seeing that all canned foods are given an adequate process to insure proper sterilization;

"(2) By seeing that all cans of food show sufficient vacuum to prevent formation of springers or flippers, which are particularly apt to occur when shipments are made from a cool to a hot climate or from a low to a high altitude; and

"(3) By providing for prompt cooling and proper storage of all canned foods, particularly acid fruits and other foods which tend to lose their vacuum by action on the metal of the containers."

Canners have been asked to write to the Association indicating their purpose to cooperate in these measures to prevent the shipment or distribution of swells or otherwise abnormal cans. Any canner who has not received a copy of the letter referred to is requested to notify the Washington office of this Association.

#### Fiber Box Specifications

At the Louisville Convention general approval was given the specifications for containers found in National Canners Association Bulletin No. 47. Following the convention, the Western Classification Committee proposed to docket these specifications for adoption at its April meeting.

In view of the importance of this subject, President Chase has appointed a committee to make a canvass of the situation and to formulate for presentation to the Classification Committee any modifications that may appear desirable in the specifications in Bulletin 47, and to insure, so far as possible, the correction of any existing deficiencies. It is understood that action by the Classification Committee will be deferred until the Committee appointed by President Chase has completed its work.

At the same time efforts will be made to obtain from distributors specific instances of inadequate containers.

The committee appointed by President Chase is as follows:

Royal F. Clark, Central Wisconsin Canneries, Beaver Dam, Wis.

B. C. Olney, New York Canners, Inc., Rochester, N. Y.

J. L. Baxter, H. L. Baxter & Bro., Brunswick, Me.

H. L. Cannon, H. P. Cannon & Son, Bridgeville, Del.  
 Richard Dickinson, Dickinson & Co., Eureka, Ill.  
 Merritt Greene, Marshall Canning Co., Marshalltown, Iowa.  
 D. F. Gerber, Fremont Canning Co., Fremont, Mich.  
 W. W. Wilder, Clyde Kraut Co., Clyde, Ohio.  
 W. L. Street, T. A. Snider Preserve Co., Chicago, Ill.  
 H. L. Herrington, Utah Canning Co., Ogden, Utah.  
 E. B. Cosgrove, Minnesota Valley Canning Co., Le Sueur, Minn.  
 Roy Nelson, Roy Nelson Canning Co., Crane, Mo.  
 H. C. Carr, Libby, McNeill & Libby, Chicago, Ill.  
 Preston McKinney, Canners League of California, San Francisco,  
 Cal.  
 E. M. Burns, Northwest Canners Association, Portland, Ore.  
 W. M. Henry, Southern California Canners Association, Los Angeles, Cal.

### Navy to Buy Canned Asparagus

Bids on canned asparagus, to be opened May 11, are being asked by the Navy Department, 30,000 pounds for delivery at Boston, 120,000 pounds at Brooklyn, 30,000 pounds at Philadelphia, 80,000 pounds at Hampton Roads, 240,000 pounds at Mare Island, and 30,000 pounds at Bremerton. Copies of Schedule 5097 on which to submit bids may be obtained from the Bureau of Supplies and Accounts, Navy Department, Washington, D. C.

### Canned Food Exports in January

Exports of canned foods in January, 1926, as compared with the corresponding month of the preceding year, were as follows:

	Pounds 1925	Pounds 1926
Canned meats, total .....	1,535,343	1,203,821
Beef .....	122,746	155,616
Sausage .....	473,196	314,710
Canned vegetables, total .....	3,351,473	4,590,009
Canned fruits, total .....	16,239,189	20,735,427
Apricots .....	2,959,591	1,440,457
Peaches .....	4,774,878	8,463,063
Pears .....	3,355,098	5,594,435
Pineapples .....	2,156,630	2,436,291
Condensed milk .....	4,701,169	3,732,797
Evaporated milk .....	5,951,518	5,961,983
Canned salmon .....	4,877,580	3,777,892
Canned sardines .....	5,760,957	7,304,994

### Tomato Canners' Costs of Production

Canners of tomatoes and tomato products who desire additional protection against imported products were advised in Information Letter No. 149 to prepare themselves to present first-

hand information with respect to their costs of production for presentation to the U. S. Tariff Commission.

In preparing this information it is suggested that, so far as possible, the costs should include a statement of the commercial grade of canned tomatoes and tomato products to which they apply, as well as the can size. This information is essential to a correct comparison with products now being imported.

#### **U. S. Standards for Cannery Tomatoes**

Grades for canning tomatoes (1926) have been announced by the U. S. Department of Agriculture, which states that grades that will provide a definite basis for contracts between the canner and the grower are meeting with increasing favor. The announcement continues:

"Such grades must recognize variations in commercial value and still be simple enough to be practical in actual operations. In recommending the attached U. S. grades the U. S. Department of Agriculture has attempted to formulate the views of leading representatives of both growers and canners and careful studies of present practices show them to be practical. However, as the idea of grading tomatoes for cannery purposes is new a further word of explanation seems desirable.

"It should be understood at the outset that the only grading required of the grower is the removal of Culls. Such tomatoes should be left in the field. It is not intended that the grower sort the tomatoes into No. 1 and No. 2 grades. The proposed grades provide a basis for sampling the tomatoes as they are delivered to the cannery.

"The application of these grades requires the services of private or official inspectors to determine the amounts of each grade in the various loads of tomatoes. Such inspectors must be capable, efficient, and above all they must be absolutely neutral. The inspectors' reports should show the percentages of U. S. No. 1, U. S. No. 2, and Cull tomatoes.

"Buying and selling on grade will encourage better production and better handling. The present practice of paying a flat price for everything which is accepted, discriminates against the best growers. The grower should be paid a suitable premium for stock of high quality which will make a high quality manufactured product. Such stock can be canned at a minimum cost. On the other hand there should be suitable penalties for the delivery of culls."

Following are the standards as given out by the Department:

#### GRADES

*U. S. No. 1* shall consist of tomatoes which are firm, ripe, well colored, well formed; free from molds and decay and from damage caused by growth cracks, worm holes, catfaces, sunscald, freezing injury, or mechanical or other means. (See minimum size).

*U. S. No. 2* shall consist of tomatoes which do not meet the requirements of the foregoing grade but which are ripe and fairly well colored and which are free from serious damage from any cause. (See minimum size).

*Culls* are tomatoes which do not meet the requirement of either of the foregoing grades.

#### MINIMUM SIZE

The minimum size may be fixed by agreement between buyer and seller. Tomatoes below this specified minimum size shall be classed as Culls.

#### DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

As used in these grades:

"Firm" means that the tomato is not soft, puffy, shriveled or water soaked.

"Well colored" means that the tomato shows at least 90% good red color.

"Fairly well colored" means that the tomato shows at least two-thirds good red color.

"Well formed" means that the tomato shall not be extremely flat or otherwise badly misshapen.

"Damage" means any injury which cannot be removed in the ordinary process of trimming and peeling without a loss of more than 10% (by weight) of the tomato in excess of that which would occur if the tomato were perfect.

"Serious damage" means any injury which cannot be removed in the ordinary process of trimming and peeling without a loss of more than 20% (by weight) of the tomato in excess of that which would occur if the tomato were perfect.

#### Halibut Bait Bill Favorably Reported

The Sutherland halibut bait bill, H. R. 9210, which would amend Section 1 of the Alaska Fisheries Act, 1924, so as to permit taking of fish and shellfish for bait at all seasons, was reported favorably February 27, and placed on the House Calendar.

#### Ranks Canning Among Seven Greatest Discoveries

In its March issue the "Forum" reviews outstanding events since 1886, the year in which the magazine was established. "Forty Scientific Years" is the title of an article by E. E. Free, which reviews the progress of science during the life of the magazine and in which a remarkable tribute is paid to the canning industry.

The chief new facts discovered by science during the last forty years, asserts Mr. Free, are the new knowledge of the atom, the Einstein theory of relativity, and the increased measure for the age of the earth. They have already modified profoundly the thought and practice of the world, he states, and are destined to modify it more profoundly still.

"But", continues Mr. Free, "they are exceeded in real importance, I believe, by a most remarkable practical accomplishment of the past forty years, an accomplishment which has gone almost unheralded in literature although it is unquestionably one of the greatest discoveries or inventions,—taking both into account,—ever made by mankind. It is the perfection of processes for canning food. If canned food had been available for Napoleon's armies it would have altered unrecognizably the present map of the world. If Egypt or Babylon had known how to can food supplies as we do, the whole course of civilization would have flowed in a different channel."

According to Mr. Free, who joins the number who have attempted to set down a list of the world's greatest inventions, there have been only seven discovery-inventions which take absolutely first rank: Discovery of the function of the seed of plants; the control of fire; the invention of pottery; the invention of writing; the idea of what we call standards; the germ theory of disease; the discovery of the art of canning food. As regards canning he states:

"The beginnings of this art go back, of course, far beyond the past forty years. Ways of conserving foods by various preservative methods have been known for ages. The Chinese have been preserving eggs, more or less successfully, although somewhat odorously, for three thousand years. It is probable that primitive hunters were drying meat strips over a smoky fire a hundred thousand years ago.

"These anticipations are beside the point. The vital thing is that within the past forty years processes have been perfected by which almost any edible material can be sealed up in a tin or in a glass jar, sterilized, and made to keep, in all its original utility, for as many years as we care to let it remain unopened. Man raises all human structures, intellectual and material alike, on a foundation of food. If food cannot be stored, civilization cannot be stored either. The unlimited food storage and virtually unlimited food shipment now made possible by canning processes is likely to appear to the historian of 3000 A. D. quite equal in importance to the discovery of agriculture or the invention of ways of taming fire.

"There are four things, then, which seem to me the outstanding and incomparably important achievements of our scientists

and inventors during the past four decades; the new knowledge of the atom, the Einstein theory of relativity, the lengthened estimates of the age of the earth, and the perfection of canned food."

#### Extension of Time for Filing Tax Returns

Extension of time in which to file an income tax return, as granted by the Internal Revenue Bureau in the case of citizens and residents of the United States whose net income for 1925 was in excess of \$5,000, and in the case of domestic corporations, does not carry with it an extension of time in which to pay the tax.

Tentative returns are required on or before March 15, 1926, and must be accompanied by at least one-fourth of the estimated amount of the tax. Tentative returns should be on the usual return form plainly marked "Tentative" at the top, contain a statement of the estimated amount of the tax believed to be due, and be properly executed. No other data need be given.

Where a taxpayer files a tentative return and fails to file a complete return within the period of the extension granted, the complete return, when filed, is subject to the penalties prescribed for delinquents.

If the estimated tax on the tentative return is less than shown to be due on the completed return, the difference will bear interest at the rate of 6 per cent per annum until paid.

The extension granted individuals whose net income for 1925 exceeded \$5,000, and corporations, is until May 15, 1926.

#### To Control Diseases of Seed Sweet Potatoes

Disinfecting seed sweet potatoes with corrosive sublimate is an effective means of controlling various diseases of the crop, the U. S. Department of Agriculture announces. In the spring, just before bedding them, the sweet potatoes should be gone over carefully, the Department advises, and those showing black rot or other suspicious blemishes should be discarded. The healthy sound potatoes should then be disinfected by immersing for from 5 to 8 minutes in a solution of corrosive sublimate made by dissolving 3 ounces of the crystals in 24 gallons of water. After 10 bushels have been treated in 24 gallons, add about  $\frac{1}{2}$  ounce of the crystals which have been previously dissolved in hot water and make up the solution to its original volume. After treating 20 bushels more, discard the solution and make up a new one if more seed is to be treated. The treated seed need not be rinsed before bedding, but should be bedded as soon as treated.

Further precautions against infection should be taken by removing all manure and soil used in the hot bed last year. This

should be displaced by new, clean soil obtained from some field where sweet potatoes have never been grown, or preferably by a good quality of sand. The frame-work of the bed should be thoroughly cleaned, and, if possible, disinfected by sprinkling with a 1 per cent solution of commercial formaldehyde or with the corrosive sublimate solution.

The plants should be set out on new ground if possible or on ground where sweet potatoes have not been grown for several years. Rotation with other crops will help reduce losses from disease.

#### Canned Food Production and Exports

An estimate of the ratio of canned foods exports to production is given in a review of the foreign trade in canned foods appearing in Commerce Reports for March 1. Unfortunately an accurate comparison is impossible, the article states, since most of the available production figures are those compiled by the Bureau of the Census, and they are published at a considerable period after the year to which they apply.

"A rough measure of this ratio, however, can be obtained by comparing the production figures for 1923, the latest now available, with the exports for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 1923. This comparison shows that our fruit exports vary from 3.4 to 46.5 per cent of the domestic production. These figures apply to cherries and pears, respectively. Approximately one-fifth of the canned salmon produced and over a quarter of the sardines were exported. About one-eighth of the evaporated milk and over a quarter of the condensed milk were consumed in foreign countries. Conditions are reversed in the case of canned vegetables, with the exception of asparagus. About one-seventh of the asparagus canned is exported, while for the other vegetables less than  $1\frac{1}{2}$  per cent of each is exported. The importance of developing foreign markets for canned vegetables can not be over-emphasized. There is no reason to believe that packs of corn, peas, tomatoes, and the other vegetables may not in any of the coming years be as large as or larger than they were in the past year. Although the domestic market for these products has not been developed to the maximum possible extent, and a wider distribution at home may be obtained, the foreign market has been almost untouched. In the case of corn the foreign possibilities are probably rather small, since very few other nations use corn as a human food. This condition, however, does not apply to any of the other canned vegetables, since all of them are well known and are frequently used either fresh or canned, throughout the civilized world."